



Historic
Curatorship
Program

Historic Curatorship Program

Department of Conservation and Recreation



Within the thousands of acres of the Commonwealth's Forests and Parks are a number of historically significant buildings with enormous potential for adaptive reuse. Without direct public funding, these mansions, houses and cottages have fallen prey to the elements and vandalism. The **Historic Curatorship Program** was established to address this issue through the formation of public-private partnerships. The program was launched in 1994 following the passage of enabling legislation (Section 44 of Chapter 85 of the Acts of 1994, amended by Section 50 of Chapter 15 of the Acts of 1996, and the 2002 Environmental Bond Bill).

Under the **Historic Curatorship Program**, DCR enters into a long term lease with a Curator/ Tenant who pays rent in the form of services, specifically the rehabilitation and maintenance of the property. The reuse of these significant properties must be compatible with its context while enhancing the visitor's experience of the public park.

Properties in the Program range from mansions on the North Shore to cottages in the Berkshires. Average lease terms range from 20 to 30 years. To date, nine of the Program's properties are under agreement, totaling an investment of almost \$5 million from the private sector into state-owned historic properties.



Glendledge Cottage, Halibut Point State Park, Rockport, Before and After

Through the Program, a "Curator/Tenant" is selected to rehabilitate, reuse and maintain one of the Program's properties in exchange for credit towards lease payments in a "work for credit" system. A *Request for Expressions of Interest* is the first step in the process of identifying a Curator/Tenant. Based on information gathered through this analysis, a more formal Request for Responses (RFR) is issued, which includes more specific cost estimates and program requirements. A prospective Curator / Tenant will respond to the RFR with a formal proposal, and will be evaluated in an open and competitive selection process. Proposals will include a project description, a statement of financial feasibility, information on experience and background, explanation of proposed public benefit component, and a detailed schedule of work, broken into phases and including an estimated time line. All work must be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation.

If selected, the Curator/Tenant will work with DCR to negotiate a lease. Work may start during lease negotiations under a Special Use Permit. DCR staff will monitor progress and adherence to the original proposal. The Curator / Tenant will submit annual or biannual reports, accounting for all hard and soft costs related to rehabilitation in order to keep track of credit towards the lease amount as determined in the lease.

PROPERTIES CURRENTLY UNDER AGREEMENT

Litchfield House at Great Brook Farm State Park (Carlisle)

This mid nineteenth-century Greek Revival farmhouse and barn sit in a wooded glen in Great Brook Farm State Park. The current tenants signed a twenty-five year lease in 1996 and are in the process of restoring the house and barn.



Gatekeeper's House and Shed at Lowell Heritage State Park (Lowell)

This 1847 house, once the residence of the Gatekeeper of the Pawtucket Dam's lock and canal systems, sits in a prominent spot overlooking the Merrimack River. The current tenant entered a ten-year lease in 1998 and currently uses it as a single family residence. DCR performed basic rehabilitation work on the barn and house prior to occupancy.

Barton House at F. Gilbert Hills State Park (Foxborough)

This 1901 Colonial Revival building overlooks placid Sunset Lake in Gilbert Hills State Park. The current tenants have entered into a twenty-five year lease in 1996 and have fully restored the house and are in the process of restoring the historic garden landscape.



Swann Lodge and Barn at Beartown State Forest (Monterey)

This turn of the century house and barn are currently under restoration. The tenants, Youth Enrichment Services (YES), signed a twenty-five year lease in 2001. YES is using the property to provide outdoor recreation programming to urban youth and the elderly.

Glenledge Cottage (Viereck House) at Halibut Point State Park (Rockport)

This late 19th century Queen Anne cottage is located in a wooded setting in seaside Halibut Point State Park. The current tenants signed a twenty year lease in 1999 and are currently in the final stages of rehabilitation of the house as a single family residence.





Bradley Palmer Mansion, Coach House and Carriage Garage at Bradley Palmer State Park (Topsfield)

This unique Tudor-Revival style early twentieth century mansion features a rubblestone exterior and elaborate medieval-inspired interiors. The house was built by famed lawyer and diplomat Bradley Palmer, and hosted President Taft and General George Patten among others. The current tenants signed a fifty year lease in 1997, have restored the mansion and are currently operating the mansion as Willowdale Estate, an events and overnight facility.

Farmhouse at Maudslay State Park (Newburyport)

This 1800 farmhouse sits at the entrance of Maudslay State Park. The current tenants have completely restored the property and are using it as a single family residence.



Walter Baker Administration Building (Dorchester / Lower Mills)

The stately Administration Building was the heart of the Baker Chocolate Factory, Keen Development Corporation, in conjunction with PreservationMASS, was chosen as a tenant in November 2000 and signed a fifty year lease. The restoration of this 1919 Classical Revival office building as artist lofts was completed in 2002.

Crosby Mansion and Graham House at Nickerson State Park (Brewster)

Following the passage of legislation (Section 224 of Chapter 127 of the Acts of 1999), a 25-year lease was signed outside of the Curatorship Program between DCR and the Town of Brewster for the 1888 mansion and two 20th century cottages. The town plans to lease the restored cottages and invest the resulting income into the restoration of the mansion.



ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES

The following properties are included in the three pieces of legislation authorizing the Historic Curatorship Program (Section 44 of Chapter 85 of the Acts of 1994, amended by Section 50 of Chapter 15 of the Acts of 1996, and the 2002 Environmental Bond Bill). While these properties are eligible for the Historic Curatorship Program, be advised that the selection process is the result of an open and competitive public process. While these properties are eligible under the enabling legislation, the Curatorship Program is not able to accept unsolicited proposals. Please contact the program for more information on which properties are being actively marketed.

NORTHEAST REGION

Atlantic District

Lamson House, Bradley Palmer S.P., Topsfield
Farm Complex, Maudslay S.P., Newburyport
Coachman's House and Barn, Maudslay S.P., Newburyport

SOUTHEAST REGION

South Coast District

Smith Farmhouse, Garage and Barn, Borderlands S.P., Easton

Cape Cod District

Harlow Farmhouse, Ellisville Harbor S.P. Plymouth

CENTRAL REGION

Quabbin Highlands District

Superintendent's House, Wachusett Mtn. S.R., Princeton
Farmhouse and Barn, Carroll Holmes R.A., Shutesbury

WEST REGION

Northern Berkshires District

Hunter House, Windsor S.F., Windsor
Windago Camp, Windsor S.F., Windsor
Bascom Lodge, Mt. Greylock S.R., Adams

Southern Berkshire District

May House, Jug End S.R., W.M.A., Egremont
Trail House, Jug End S.R.-W.M.A., Egremont
Guilder Homestead, Jug End S.R.-W.M.A., Egremont
Headquarters House, Beartown S.F., Monterey
Hunt House, Mt. Washington S.F., Mt. Washington
Ann Lee Cottage (& Intemann House), Mt. Washington S.F., Mt. Washington

For more information on the program, please contact:

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